

Ault Obstacle Course dedicated to fallen VNG Soldier

Family, friends and current and former Virginia National Guard Soldiers joined the leadership of Fort Pickett for the ribbon cutting and dedication of the Staff Sgt. Jesse Ault Wheeled Vehicle Obstacle Course Sept. 20, 2019, at Fort Pickett, Virginia. Ault was killed in action April 9, 2008, in Baghdad, Iraq, from wounds suffered when his vehicle encountered an improvised explosive device while assigned to the 429th Brigade Support Battalion.

Ault's widow Betsy attended the ceremony with their two children, and was joined by current and former Soldiers who served with him. Those who knew and served with Ault, who was a motor transport operator, said they couldn't think of a more fitting honor for the Soldier, husband and father who gave his life for the cause of freedom.

"I think it's wholly appropriate that Jesse's name is on it," said Lt. Col. Mike Waterman, who was Ault's company commander on a previous deployment to Iraq. "He was a great Soldier and a great driver. The fact that it's here to train Soldiers is appropriate because Jesse was dedicated to that, not just his mission, but making those around him better."

Read more: <https://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2019/09/30/14104/>



Family of Staff Sgt. Jesse Ault and the leadership of Fort Pickett cut the ribbon of the Staff Sgt. Jesse Ault Wheeled Vehicle Obstacle Course Sept. 20, 2019, at Fort Pickett, Virginia.

Virginia National Guard News Headlines

Virginia Defense Force consolidates regimental organization

The Virginia Defense Force stood down its 2nd, 3rd and 4th Regiments and stood up its 1st Regiment during a ceremony held Sept. 29, 2019, at Fort Pickett, Virginia. The regimental will oversee six companies stationed across the state focused on providing civil support security and communications capabilities.

Read more: <https://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2019/10/03/14142/>

ESGR Boss Lift held for employers of 2-224th Aviation

More than 25 employers of Virginia National Guard Soldiers were able to experience the environments their employees work in first-hand during an Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve Boss Lift.

Read more: <https://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2019/10/02/14130/>

Employer Support Freedom Award nomination season opened October 1

The Department of Defense is pleased to announce the 2020 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award Nomination Season opened October 1, 2019.

Read more: <https://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2019/09/30/14147/>

Vehicle sale scams put service members, public at risk

Scammers who want to impersonate service members for financial gain might not be the obvious enemy, but the threat they pose to the military is a very real and significant one.

Read more: <https://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2019/09/28/13992/>

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Join the Virginia Army National Guard Alumni Network

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34th CST trains to prepare for external evaluation

Virginia National Guard Soldiers and Airmen assigned to the Fort Pickett-based 34th Civil Support Team conducted hazardous materials identification and response training Sept. 24, 2019, at Defense Supply Center Richmond, Virginia, and Sept. 26, at the Prince George Wellness Center in Disputanta, Virginia.

The 34th CST supports first responders in potential hazardous materials incidents involving possible chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosive threats.

"They will call us to come in and assist with the identification of the unknown agent in order to give them some control measure to help get that situation under control," explained Army Lt. Col. David Wheeler, the 34th CST commander. "We will identify that agent and where it's coming from and report back to the incident commander on the ground to provide him or her with mitigation factors on how best to go forward to protect the public, the infrastructure and the community around the area."

Army Capt. Samantha Vittorioso is the science officer for the 34th CST and the training demonstrated the teamwork required between various sections for the success of the team.

"As the science officer, you're trying to help the survey section so they take the right sample and you're working with the medical section to make sure the signs and symptoms of the patients match what they're seeing down range," she said. "At the same time, you're trying to keep the operations section involved and aware so they can get the right resources if needed."

"We're trying to see if what we see downrange makes sense with what the signs and symptoms are," said Vittorioso, who has been with the 34th CST for two years and previously served on CSTs in Massachusetts and Guam. "If not, we know something's missing so the survey team's going in to try to find the missing piece."

This training was in preparation for the 34th CST's external evaluation in November. Approximately every 18 months, the 34th CST conducts an external evaluation where they are evaluated on 12 different collective tasks including deploying the team, establishing communications and medical support, conducting technical decontamination, CBRN assessments and analytical functions as well as conducting interagency coordination.

A team from U.S. Army North's Civil Support Readiness Group – East, Southeast Division was on hand to observe the training and provide feedback to the unit's commander to help prepare the team for their external evaluation.

"This training was unique in the fact that it not only prepared our unit for our upcoming Training Proficiency Exercise but this particular CLT was more difficult as it focused not only on our core mission but also in the unity of the group since our recent turnover," Wheeler said.

The 34th CST last completed an external evaluation in May 2018.

The 34th CST is one of 57 such units in the country and is equipped with a wide range of the latest military and commercial equipment CBRN equipment. It is made up of 22 full-time Army



Soldiers and Airmen assigned to the Fort Pickett-based 34th Civil Support Team conduct hazardous materials identification and response training Sept. 26, in Disputanta, Virginia.

and Air National Guard personnel who bring a wide range of military skills as well as career experience from the civilian sector. The unit is divided into six sections: command, operations, communications, administration/logistics, medical/analytical and survey.

Each team member completes between 500 and 900 hours of specialized training during their first year of assignment and continues advanced training throughout their tenure with multiple agencies including the Virginia Department of Emergency Management, the National Fire Academy, the Defense Threat Reduction Agency, the Department of Energy and the Environmental Protection Agency.

Read more: <https://vanguard.dodlive.mil/2019/10/01/14117/>

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